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SECOND FIDDLES.

Of all instruments, from the grand organ to the penny whistle, that which perhaps is held in least estimation among men is the Second Fiddle. Even those who play upon it themselves, now and then—and even oftener—no sooner perceive it in the hands of another performer, than they cannot conceal their contempt for it: it is not his execution that they find fault with, for, indeed, the better he understands his calling, the more they sneer, but that he should make use of that channel of melody at all. They pelt him openly with a number of opprobrious names—Toady, Snob, Fawner, Sycophant; they whisper to one another still worse epithets, for which they are indebted to the venerable Dean Swift; and at every note he evokes from his unpretentious violin, they nudge one another's elbows.

Now, although, for my own part, I have always played upon an independent little Jews-harp of my own, without aspiring to the instrument in question, yet I cannot withhold my admiration from the performers upon the second fiddle. Not only are they the most diligent and persevering of all social musicians, unabashed by failure, and if unhappily out of tune with their leader, endeavouring to remedy that defect with all meekness; but there is something pathetic, in my eyes, in their despised calling. There is a vulgar-looking person with a pan's-pipe—but not healthily vulgar, only mean—who accompanies *Punch* his theatre, and does what he can with his common-places to rob that exquisite spectacle of its enchantments. Now and then, he asks Mr *Punch* a question, and elicits in reply a stinging epigram, in high falsetto, from the popular favourite, which sinks him lower than ever in public opinion. This degraded being, however, collects the money which is paid by the spectators, and doubtless keeps some of it for himself; whereas the musicians I have in my mind receive contempt without reward. All the money, as well as the adulation, is paid directly to the principal performer; it never touches the hand of him of the second fiddle even *in transitu*. There is surely something touching in this labour without pay or praise; in these struggles without any acknowledgment! It is not to be supposed, of course, that the public should go into raptures with efforts which, it is well understood, are directed solely to please the first fiddle; but when he evinces no

satisfaction—and he scarcely ever does—I confess it makes my heart bleed. I am sure that if any gentleman would give himself up, soul and body, to the task of making himself agreeable to me, that I should be at least affable and condescending. If he never contradicted me, and was always sanguine about what was going to happen, and continually expressed his belief that I was the most humorous writer now alive, I feel certain I should smile upon him in return. I never had but one admirer, a pointer-dog of the name of Jock, but I fully reciprocated his undeserved esteem; I would not have rejected his simple methods of ingratiation for a great deal of money; his dear old jaws used to nestle in my best waistcoats, and slobber them without the least reproof. When he died, I wrote his epitaph, and the esteemed relative to whom he belonged had the same engraved upon a tombstone, at an expense which, when the bill came in, I believe a little astonished her. I had nothing to do with *that*. Neither my actions nor my feelings with regard to that departed dog have given me since the least uneasiness. He faithfully played the second fiddle, and I was truly grateful to him for the accompaniment.

This gratitude is, however, far from common. I have had the misfortune to meet a certain literary person more than once, whom to name would be to offend. Let every reader fill up the hiatus with any private enemy of his own who writes for bread and butter. This gentleman lived after his time; I say, 'lived,' for, excepting in the sense in which genius is said to be immortal, he lives no longer. He ought to have been the contemporary of Savage, but I am sorry to say he was mine instead. He was born to hector in a pot-house, and he accomplished his rôle whenever the opportunity occurred; when it did not occur, he generally managed to make the opportunity. In liquor, the subjects of his conversation were three: his family, his literary works, and himself; out of liquor—but as I only met him twice, I should have been fortunate indeed to have seen him in that condition; I only speak of what I saw. Remarkable as this man was for the above attributes (considering the epoch in which he flourished), he was still more noteworthy from the number of second fiddles which always waited upon him. If, being deserted by the gods, it struck you to ask this professor of the *belles-lettres* to dinner, the invitation had to be extended to certain lieutenants. Egotistic as he was, he could not

perpetrate his solo without the assistance of their sweet voices. They led the conversation into an Ancestral channel, which introduced his Family; they discoursed of Literature, which introduced his Works; and finally, they proposed his Health, which introduced Himself. Conceive a Johnson, filled, not with genius, but with whisky, and 'brought out' by several Boswells. The humiliation of the whole company—speaker, toadies, host, and guests—of course extended to myself; but amid my blushes, I did entertain a sentiment of pity for the miserable 'led captains.' That old-world title admirably suited with their condition. They were treated by their lord and master with a brutality only to be paralleled in the manners of two centuries ago. In the very act of subservience, they were snubbed by the voice of him to whom they tendered homage; they bent before him, and he set his foot upon their necks. I protest that a sympathetic shudder communicated itself to my own vertebra. I could have forgiven the man his vulgar braggadocio; I could have placed his state of intoxication as a set-off against his bad manners; but when in his egotistic frenzy he tore his very parasites from their hold, and ground them with his heel, as they still clung, as it were, about his ancles, then I gave the wretch up, and hardened my heart against him for ever. A man that would thus shatter his own second fiddles would murder his mother. Surely, if there be any law of Compensation in human affairs, these unhappy Echoes will be one day given a voice of their own, and permission to use it.

Of course, the second fiddles who are professional persons stand on quite other ground. Even the Church does not disdain to employ such instruments in her harmonious cosmogony. In the place of worship in which it is my privilege to rent a few sittings, there are three of those inferior violins called curates. Their spiritual and temporal master, the rector, is understood to possess the gift of pulpit eloquence, and he himself endorses the congregational opinion: it is as impossible for a young woman to be unaware of her beauty, as for a divine not to know that he is persuasive. If the former can get a plain female cousin to go about with her, so much the better; if the latter can procure a curate, who has a slight impediment in his speech, his own orations derive advantage. The 'delivery' of our rector is held to be particularly beautiful: of the three curates, one has a slight lisp; another has so weak a voice that he cannot be heard beyond the second pillar; and the third (doubtless from some conscientious motive) refuses to aspirate his 'As.' We have had less decrepit specimens, and more satisfactory to the congregation at large, but somehow or other, they have always failed to satisfy their superior. Some of them have been good-looking young fellows enough, with an earnest air, and impressive manners, but the fact is, that our rector was not anxious to retain these seraphines; he wanted second fiddles; and now he has got them, 'which nobody (as the song says) can deny who has ever listened to them. They read prayers when he is advertised to preach; they are only allowed to deliver a sermon at afternoon service, when few except nursery-maids are present; and, the bronchial tubes having before now proved the channels of clerical popularity, they are forbidden to have interesting diseases. An old pew-opener, who is a motherly sort of person, and has recommended some decoction of her own to the one with the weak voice, is the only individual beside myself who takes any interest in these young divines. As for me, their very appearance strikes me as infinitely more pathetic than our rector's most elaborate periods. I go to church in the afternoon by preference; and if any decoction would cure a lisp, or furnish a gentleman with a sufficiency of aspirates, I would procure it at any expense within my means.

Nature has put it out of my power to venture upon

the perfidious seas without the most frightful results; therefore I can say nothing of my own knowledge about the second fiddles of Her Majesty's navy; I am told, however, that there is a particularly large supply of that instrument to be found on board ship. These are made, too, upon a capital plan; they are reversible: upon one side, which is always presented to an inferior, they represent first fiddles. Thus, the captain, except on the rare occasions when the admiral comes on board, sees nothing but second fiddles; whereas the powder-monkeys see nothing but first. A curious optical illusion.

I have also no personal experience of how this matter is managed at the bar, but from the published reports of law-cases, I should imagine that the second-fiddle system is there to be witnessed in perfection. 'For the plaintiffs, Mr Glib, Q.C.; Messrs Singsmall and Nocoout were also retained on the same side.' Mr Glib, we read, made 'a powerful appeal,' which occupies a column and a half of the newspaper. 'Mr Singsmall made a few observations. Mr Nocoout followed.' The observations are not printed, so that we do not know whither Mr Nocoout went. This want of public acknowledgment is to me excessively touching. I dare say, the two juniors knew a great deal more about the plaintiff's case than Mr Glib, Q.C. I am quite sure they gave it a great deal more consideration. They talked of it, walking arm-in-arm under that wretched little portico which runs round our Courts of Chancery; they discussed it on that neglected lawn where awkward squads of the Devil's Own are for ever taking their sad pleasure; and although they looked at the matter from every possible point of view, and exhausted it, they never hinted to one another, they never entertained in their own bosoms the desirability of cutting Glib's throat. These are the men that have my sympathy; and if I had a Chancery case to-morrow (which, I am thankful to say, I have not), I would instruct my attorney to let Singsmall have his chance. There is nothing mean or fawning about him; he is only possessed by a divine patience.

No eye, perhaps, that does not belong to a member of the faculty has ever witnessed a medical consultation between a family doctor and the Expert who has been called in at a crisis; the profession is bound to secrecy; otherwise, a very pretty illustration of our subject might, I should think, be borrowed from that source. These gentlemen always take lunch together, and both wine-glasses are made use of; but whether the inferior violin discourses any thin music—whether there is consultation, in short, or only didactic monologue, that is more than I can say. My own belief is, that No. 1 makes some remark upon the quality of the liquor, with which No. 2 hastens to agree; that at the expiration of what No. 1 considers a decent interval, he winks, whereto the other smiles with intelligent subservience; then out they come in proper order, and with supernatural gravity, and the first fiddle remarks: 'The case could not be left in better hands than these in which he found it: every remedy known to science has been employed, and the rest must be left to Nature.' The appearance of No. 2 during these observations is that of a gentleman who is receiving knighthood from the blade of his sovereign. Altogether, the second fiddle medical is the least to be pitted of all that class of instrument.

I protest I would far rather be one of the above than any of the same description who belong, for instance, to the parliamentary band at St Stephen's. You, my Chartist friend, who demand not only to elect a representative, but to sit, perchance, in the Commons House yourself, you know not what you ask. It is possible that your own talents may entitle you to a leadership; but there is your brother, at least, who is not equally gifted—let us take his case. He never gets to his attic, during the whole session, until two o'clock A.M. If he leaves the hall of senators before

that time, the whipper-in is swiftly upon his track. He is given huge crude blue-books to devour, not for his own intellectual aliment, but for that of his chief's; like a mother, who only consults the well-being of her babe, and avoids cucumber and pickled salmon, he must shun all pleasurable reading, and collect facts only to nourish another at second-hand. I would rather, for my part, feed a baby, if my sex permitted my so doing, than 'cram' a minister of state with spoon-meat of this sort. In the one case, you do, at all events, get credit for what you do; whereas, in the other, what happens? you have the satisfaction of reading in the morning paper that your political master, 'in reference to the internal affairs of San Marino, made one of those pellucid digests of our foreign policy with which his reputation is associated.'

This is not pleasant; but, as has been said, you may be second fiddle in any *professional* walk of life without discredit. You may be humble without cringing. It is only those who volunteer a symphony upon this despised instrument that are looked down upon. Rare as is playing upon the violin among females, not a few of them, such as Companions and Poor Relations, are compelled to adopt the second fiddle for a livelihood; nobody, I hope, ventures to sneer at them for so doing. The hearts of all true gentlemen feel for these, and their hands fly to their hats. But when a male, who could dig, and I should fancy would not be ashamed to beg, undertakes, instead, a menial situation of this kind, how that poor fellow gets despised! Even when he does not do it for a livelihood, but simply because it is his barnacle-nature thus ingloriously to adhere to a fellow-creature, what severe things, and especially by those who occasionally adopt the same line of business, are said of him. However, there is one bosom, within the waistcoat of the present writer, which entertains far other sentiments. When I hear the unambitious twanging of these genuine base viols, my whole soul melts with pity. I cannot fancy a situation more deserving of a good man's tear. To live without sympathy is, we are told, exceedingly difficult; but to have to simulate it before a too discerning world, and towards a patron who perhaps treats it with ridicule after all—Let my fellow-countrymen pity poor needlewomen, Poles, Female Blondins—I reserve my compassion for the second fiddlers. Talk of negro bondage, why, negroes enjoy themselves occasionally. Some people lose their appetites for the whole day, if they chance to see an ox overdriven, or a small dog set upon by a larger one: it is the humiliation of Man which spoils my dinner.

I have just seen one of the saddest sights, from my point of view, in all London. You have doubtless beheld these one or two private coaches-and-four—drags, I believe, they are called—which, like spectres of the Four-in-hand Club, still haunt the park-drive, and strive to resuscitate the last century. Well, there is one left in town even now, in this September month, and of course there is a man to drive it. I find no fault with him whatever. If a being, who is intended to be a rational creature, derives pleasure from holding in one hand about a hundredweight of leather reins in the dog-days, by all means let him hold them. There are also two footmen, faultlessly attired, who sit with folded arms, serene, upon the hind-seat: they are only earning their livelihood. But besides these, there is, unhappily, a dependent swell, who sits next the driver, and who can surely derive neither pleasure nor profit from such a situation. He is as calm and majestic to look at as his companion, but it is impossible that he can be happy. *He* has no pride in the four 'tits' which 'spank along' so merrily; they are not his property; they are no amusement to him; he has no instrument with which to flick a fly off the near leader's ear. There is some danger in his high position, but surely little glory. The very grooms cast supercilious

glances at him from under their cockaded hats. The coach with the inside blinds up, as though it contained a corpse, is a striking sight; an empty carriage with four horses to draw it, may excite the interest of the economist, as an example of waste of power: the driver's science may possibly evoke from the passing moralist some such quotation as—

A Grecian youth of talents rare,
Whom Plato's philosophic care
Had formed for virtue's nobler view,
By precepts and example too,
Would often boast his matchless skill
To curb the steed and guide the wheel.

But as to the poor fellow to the left of the box-seat, he interests nobody but me, he spoils nobody's dinner except mine. Nobody inquires Who he is, or What he is, for everybody knows—He is a Second Fiddle.

UNIQUES.

PERSONS who read in the newspapers about the high prices occasionally given for *uniques*, whether in the form of books, autographs, paintings, drawings, engravings, etchings, coins, or what not, are very often a little puzzled to know for what reason such vast sums are given for articles to which this name is applied. They may well be puzzled, for it belongs to a curious chapter in human nature. The word itself properly means 'only one of the kind;' and although this meaning is not strictly applied, rarity or smallness of number is always to be understood. The pride of man is at the bottom of the whole affair. We are all more or less disposed to chuckle at possessing something the like of which cannot be possessed by any one else. Of two school-boys, he who obtains the larger slice of cake can hardly refrain from triumphing a little over the other; and if blue-eyed dolls are in fashion, the little girl who has one with black eyes has the mortification of knowing that her ill-luck is a glorification to her companion who is better provided. Since, from the nature of things, the total number of articles of any one kind is gradually diminishing, this pride of possession will increase in a proportionate ratio; until at length, when there is only one of the kind left, the value of this one is limited only by the intensity of the pride of possession among persons rich enough to be able to indulge their whim. The ordinary commercial rules of value are quite overthrown here; for the prices given for uniques bear no reasonable proportion either to the utility or the beauty of the article purchased.

The whole range of artistic and literary productions bears evidence on this point. Where an enormous price is given for a first-rate picture by a first-rate artist, the theory of uniques has nothing absurd about it, although we may be astonished at the extent to which it is carried out; because such works, produced by artists not now living, must by the lapse of time become necessarily fewer and fewer. Thus, L.2100 for Sir Joshua Reynolds's small picture of the 'Strawberry Girl,' and L.24,000 for Murillo's 'Immaculate Conception,' are comprehensible, however much we may marvel at such prices. There was once given L.320 for a single impression of an engraving by Raffaele Morghen, because the engraving is very beautiful, and because that was one of the few *good* copies known to exist. But even in these choicest works the odd side of the propensity repeatedly peeps out. If an engraver takes off a few impressions from a plate, then adds some more touches, and prints off a larger number in the finished state, a copy of the *first* series will sell higher than one of the second—simply because there are fewer of them, and in spite of the fact that the engraving is really less complete. Print-collectors tell of instances of this kind hardly credible, were not the testimony indisputable.

And so it is with autographs, coins, cameos, carvings,

enamels, chased metal, and other articles which collectors accumulate around them. The prices given bear ratio to the fewness of the specimens known to exist, rather than to their beauty or intrinsic value. Scraps of paper, on which eminent men have written their names, acquire a very fluctuating and indeterminate value on this account. At M. Donnadieu's sale of autographs in 1851, many letters written by eminent men in the time of the Charleses fetched from L.20 to L.30 each; and L.51 was given for the original contract of marriage between Charles I. and the Infanta of Spain. A scrap of paper was sold by Messrs Pattick and Simpson, a few months ago, for L.29, because it contained a few lines written by William of Wykeham, the builder of Winchester Cathedral; and the British Museum copy of Florio's translation of Montaigne's *Essays* was bought at a very large sum, simply because it contains on one page an autograph of Shakspeare—the name written by the man. A sum of L.200 was given in 1813 for a copy of Johnson's Dictionary; but this was because it contained numerous marginal notes by Horne Tooke, which the purchaser intended to use in the production of a new edition. How can such things be valued, as a broker would call it; how can he do other than guess at the intensity of the wish to obtain uniques at a particular time? In 1808, when the British Museum bought the Lansdown Manuscripts, three judges were asked to place a money-value on them; the estimates differing widely, a mean or average of the three was taken, and this value was paid—perhaps as sensible a plan as could be adopted.

Some of the old coins are marketable at prices utterly beyond their original value, simply because there are only a few of them left. At the sale of the Earl of Pembroke's collection in 1840, silver pennies were sold for L.10, L.15, and L.20 each. One, issued by Wiglaf, king of Mercia, about 830 A.D., brought L.30; and another, issued by Cynethryth, queen of Offa, king of Mercia, L.31. A royal, or half-sovereign of Henry VII.'s time, sold for L.100. The pattern-piece of a fifty-shilling gold coin, engraved by Simon for Oliver Cromwell, brought L.76; the pattern-piece of a crown or five shillings, engraved by the same skilful hand, L.135; and the pattern-piece for a six-angel coin of Edward VI.'s time, 'supposed to be quite unique,' L.185. The 'quite unique' was the talisman in this particular instance.

At Mr Bernal's sale, a few years ago—besides the enormous prices eagerly given for enamels, cameos, Majolica and Palissy ware, carvings, &c.—there were a number of curious articles not easily grouped into any particular category. A rare time the executors of that gentleman had of it; they got L.127 for a Sèvres vase which he had bought for L.17, and L.1492 for a pair which he had obtained for L.200; and no doubt something similar might have been said in regard to the brass dish sold for L.22, another for L.47, steel keys at L.10 and L.11 each, a steel lock for a shrine, L.42, and the hundred and upwards of useless old watches, bought at prices ranging up to L.75 each, on account either of the beautiful work displayed on them, or of the odd way in which they were shaped in resemblance to ovals, octagons, lozenges, padlocks, tulips, books, skulls, crucifixes, ducks, eagles, spoons, fleurs-de-lis, roses, pears, lyres, balloons, melons, and hearts. One feels almost tempted to accept the badinage which *Punch* poured out on the Bernal sale, in the form of an imaginary sale of odds-and-ends, possessing no value whatever except in relation to some one incident which connects them with some one known person. But Mr Bernal was really a man of taste, who admitted nothing into his collection but what had artistic merit of some kind or other.

The old violins and violoncellos take rank among the *uniques* of musical virtuosi. Some two centuries ago, there were Italian makers famous for beautiful

instruments of this class. Many of those instruments still exist; but as they naturally became lessened in number by the wear and tear of time, those which are left approach nearer and nearer to the character of real uniques. Some players assert that these old stringed instruments improve as they get older, by a molecular change affecting the resonant power of the wood, and this is not unlikely; but the prices now given depend mainly, not on the actual beauty of tone, but on the fact, that the instruments were made by this or that renowned maker. A collector does not need to say, 'A violin made by Amati.' As a picture-dealer speaks of his 'Annibale Caracci' and his 'Agostino Caracci,' so does the violin virtuoso speak in raptures of his 'Hieronymo Amati,' his 'Antonio Amati,' his 'Nicolo Amati,' his 'Straduarius,' his 'Guarnerius,' and his 'Steiner.' How much depends upon the fiddle, how much upon the fiddler, none but the 'experts' can truly tell; but on a recent occasion the two were combined in an auction-room in a very telling way. At a sale by auction in the Hôtel Drouot in Paris, in 1859, where some instruments of this *recherché* kind were sold, a fine 'Straduarius' was introduced to an eager auditory. Just as the auctioneer, the 'Christie' of Paris, was about to expatiate on the merits of the violin, M. Léon Regnier came forward, took the instrument, and for half an hour 'discoursed most eloquent music' with it. Whether it was the fiddle or the fiddler (as we have said), or both, the result was to rouse up the bidders to a state of frenzy, and they outbid each other up to a very formidable price.

All things considered, however, books are perhaps the most remarkable exemplars of the theory of uniques, owing to the great number of circumstances which determine the value at any particular time. Few, even book-auctioneers, can guess how much money a rare book will bring. Dr Mead one day gave 16s. for a copy of Aretin's version of Phalaris, a scarce book printed in 1485; some years afterwards, he sold it by auction for L.85. Dr Farmer had a volume of twelve old English poems, of excessive rarity, which was bought at his sale for L.26 by the Duke of Roxburgh; the twelve were taken apart, and sold separately some years afterwards, when the Roxburgh Collection was dispersed, at prices averaging about L.45 each, or L.538 in the whole.

At a famous sale of Mr Gardner's library, many years ago, a copy of the first edition of Cranmer's Bible sold for L.121; one of Matthews's, printed in 1537, L.150; Tyndale's Pentateuch, 'three leaves wanting,' L.159; while a precious copy of the first Protestant Bible, translated by Miles Coverdale, and printed at Zurich in 1535, brought L.365, although wanting the title-page and one leaf of the dedication. A block-book copy of the Apocalypse (that is, all the types being carved in wood instead of being cast in metal) sold for L.168; the Canterbury Tales of Chaucer, printed by Wynkyn de Worde in 1498, L.245; the first edition of Shakspeare, 1623, L.250. At Mr Bindley's sale in 1820, old ballads of Charles II.'s time sold for astounding prices; and L.31 was given for *The History of Two English Lovers*, printed in 1561—not because that was a very early date, but because hardly any other copy was known. At another sale, L.194 was given for *The Seven Profytes of Truhyllacion*, and L.264 for *The Dictes and Sayings of Philosophers*, because they were printed by Caxton. In 1813, the Marquis of Blandford gave L.315 for a copy of Gower; while, at the same sale, L.352 was given for Caxton's *Mirror of the World*, and L.478 for three volumes of old ballads.

The Roxburgh sale, in 1812, was the most celebrated ever known—not for the number of books (at Mr Heber's sale, the mere catalogue filled five large octavo volumes), but for the prices realised. There is a scarce work by De Bry, *Travels in America*, printed about 1590, and illustrated by plates. Whether he was a good traveller, and had

much to tell, mattered not in the least; it was because the book was difficult to get that people bid high for it. The Duke of Devonshire was determined to have it, and was driven up to a bidding of L.546. The duke soon afterwards met Earl Spencer (another wealthy book-collector) returning in his carriage from the House of Lords, 'and made a sort of triumphant cheering by waving his hat round his head.' This incident was, however, connected with Colonel Stanley's sale about the same period; but it was at the Roxburgh sale that the Duke of Devonshire gave L.1000 for a copy of Caxton's *Recuyell of the Histories of Troye*, a folio of 1471. The charms of this treasure were three in number—it was the first book printed by Caxton with a date; it was the first book printed in the English language; and it had manuscript notes tending to shew that it once belonged to the Lady Elizabeth Grey, Queen of Edward IV. Eclipsing all other examples was the famous copy of the *Decameron* of Boccaccio, illustrating the very highest development of the book-mania. It was a small folio, printed by Valdarfer in 1471, a book in faded yellow morocco binding. So extremely scarce is this very early edition, that the copy at the Roxburgh sale had brought L.100 even so far back as the beginning of the last century. On the eventful day of sale, Evans's auction-room was crowded with wealthy collectors, and it soon became known that the Duke of Devonshire, the Marquis of Blandford, and Earl Spencer were determined to struggle for the *Decameron*. The price at which it was knocked down to the marquis was L.2260, a sum quite unparalleled in the history of bookselling. It was an *on dit* afterwards that the Marquis of Blandford would have gone up to L.5000 rather than fail to obtain the volume. Immediately after this, Earl Spencer was inundated with offers of beautiful old Boccaccios from various parts of Europe, so great was the excitement occasioned by the news of the Roxburgh sale and its results.

Let it be borne in mind that the actual literary merit of the book has scarcely anything to do with the astounding prices above noticed. The collectors don't read these rare books when they have bought them; they value them on other grounds. In the first place, 'Large Paper' copies are looked out for, not because the buyer values the paper, but because there are fewer of those than of 'Small Paper' copies. The 'Uncut Copies,' with the edges of the leaves rough, are highly estimated. 'Tall Copies,' not much cut down by the binder, are in like estimation. 'First Editions,' 'Black-letter Editions,' used before modern English type was employed; 'Vellum Editions,' printed on vellum instead of paper; 'Illustrated Copies,' in which some enthusiastic collector has bound up all the appropriate engravings and wood-cuts he can lay his hands on—all are more valued than ordinary copies, irrespective of that rarity, through lapse of time, which gives rise to the real theory of uniques. There have at times been editions of the Bible printed with a wrong and even very objectionable word at some particular part, and a few copies printed before the error was detected; these copies would now sell for very much more than those which are correct throughout. Dr Dibdin pleasantly ridiculed all this in his *Bibliosopia*. 'I feel myself irresistibly impelled to give vent to an enthusiastic idea which has been growing upon me during the whole progress of my remarks upon the unique copy. My idea is, that the collector, if so unhappy as not to be possessed of such a treasure as a unique copy, may boldly, nobly, and resolutely create one for himself, and one that shall throw every other out of the ranks of competition. Let the collector print (not publish) two beautiful black-letter editions, properly seasoned with typographical errors, and each consisting but of two copies, one on large paper, and one on small, of whatever book he

may first lay his hand on; the circumstance of merit being a matter in which his anxiety is not at all concerned. Finally, let him "illustrate" his large-paper copy. The grand object of his ambition is already nearly accomplished; for (1) he has a "large-paper" copy; (2), he has an "uncut" copy (for here he has nothing to do but just to let its edges alone); (3), he has a "first edition" (it was solely with a view to securing this point that I recommend two editions, "first" implying and requiring a "second"); (4), he has a "true" edition ("true" being the collector's name for that which has some known typographical blunder in it); (5), he has a "black letter;" (6), he has an "illustrated" copy; (7), he has a "unique" copy—or the deuce is in it.'

THE MOATED GRANGE.

IN TWO CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER I.

THE Moated Grange was 'to let' for many years. It bore a bad name, and as, moreover, it was eight miles off the coach-road, and two hundred and seventy from London, in days when railways were not, its chance of a tenant was very remote. The poor people in the adjacent village—Endham—believed that the house was haunted, and would not go near it after dark; the neighbouring gentry shuddered when they spoke of its dreary aspect, and of melancholy events which had occurred in it. The existing proprietor had never been there; but one very old lady remembered the place in a far-back resident's (General Spencer's) time, and had partaken in his convivialities. When the right chord was struck, she narrated facts of which an epitome follows: The general was popular in youth, but became, later in life, a harsh husband to a gentle, well-born, delicate wife; hating her, it was said, because she brought him no family; after her death, he married, with indecent haste, her handsome, haughty, flaunting maid, a foreigner of suspected antecedents. Retribution was brought on the old man through her, for ladies, of course, did not visit her; and the few male friends and relatives who had intended to cling to him, fell off, because she made his house hateful to them by her niggardliness and presumption. So he was in a manner shut out of the world with her; and she cowed him completely by virtue of the power of a strong mind over a weak one. All orders to servants, tenants, and lawyers passed through her. She had lovely children, but they died, one after another, just as they were emerging from infancy. Their mother became more silent, exacting, even cruel; and General Spencer sank, after ten years' degradation. He died holding the hand of an attached servant, who, for his sake, had endured Mrs Spencer's tyranny, and dissembled his hatred of her. She produced a will, dated in the first year of her marriage, bequeathing to her all the unentailed property; and language could not adequately describe her surprise and fury when the apothecary, who had attended her husband during his slow decline, put another into the hands of the family lawyer. It was a recent one, made within a month of the general's death, revoking all previous testamentary dispositions, leaving an annuity of one hundred pounds to his wife, a few trifling legacies to friends and servants, and everything else to his heir-at-law and distant relation, Marmaduke Sandford.

The enraged woman talked of fraud and conspiracy, but in vain; the last will was in every respect legally correct. She vowed vengeance on

every one whom she suspected of having furnished her victim with the opportunity of making it; and, far into a winter's night, she walked up and down the leafless avenue, regardless of rain and piercing wind. The turbulence of her passions did not preserve her from taking a cold, which settled on her lungs, and ended in inflammation. She died hardened and unpitied. Marmaduke Sandford had her buried in the churchyard, without a stone to mark her last resting-place, saying that the sooner so worthless a woman was forgotten the better. A few months afterwards, he brought his family to live at the Grange, and for a time all went well with them. Within three years, however, his second son shewed symptoms of consumption; they developed rapidly, and he died in his twentieth year. A sister soon followed him, and Mrs Sandford's health became alarmingly delicate. Her devoted husband took her and their two surviving children—a son, and daughter—to the south of France, and there, within a twelvemonth, the parents died of a local epidemic.

The family affliction did not depress the spirit of young Marmaduke and Alicia Sandford. They decided the notion that misfortune was involved in possession of the old family residence, and returned thither to be merry when a year's mourning had expired. Alicia married soon and well; and then her brother brought a pretty young wife to fill her place in his home. He had a long period—nearly eighteen years—of prosperity and domestic happiness: then small-pox robbed him in a few weeks of wife and children. The blow deprived him of reason, and he was found with his throat cut, having been, to all appearance, dead many hours. Alicia's eldest son, Eustace Lambert, succeeded to the Grange, and promised his mother that nothing should induce him to reside in or even visit the scene of so much family misery. A confidential person was sent to remove the pictures, plate, and valuable furniture; and then the house was locked up, and the spiders had their own way in it for long silent years.

Sir Roger Austen was justly displeased with his eldest son: he had made a marriage which shocked the family tone. The bride was wealthy, and, though not of ancient descent, could not be justly deemed of low extraction, for if her forefathers had amassed money in trade, her grandfather and father had held their own in the very society to which the Austens belonged. She was, moreover, very handsome, fascinating, and accomplished. The objection was to her levity. Her numerous conquests had been conducted with a freedom of manner which had exposed her character to serious animadversion. Old maids, and ladies who had unattractive daughters, spoke of her as lost; good-natured and uninterested persons said it was a great pity she laid herself open to remark as she did. The Austens kept her at a distance. They could not avoid knowing and meeting her, but their manner to her was the perfection of courteous frigidity. She understood it; called them formal, cold, prudish, priggish, and boasted that she would punish them. It was a pity that she succeeded. They had been for generations *sans peur et sans reproche*: the matrons unimpeachable and dignified, the maidens modest, the men high-spirited and honourable. Men of such a stamp, however, are often, in defiance of their better judgment, attracted by the very women whom their mothers and sisters deprecate. Lydia Harris kept young Roger Austen hovering round her two seasons. In the first place, he was handsome and talented, and his admiration was a decided 'feather in

her cap,' and it enabled her to annoy his family; in the next place, though she was incapable of appreciating such a man's love, she liked being its object; and lastly, he was an excellent match. If she did not succeed in making Lord Whylie propose, she would marry Roger. She was not in love, never should be again; she had got over 'all that sort of thing' before she was eighteen. 'Poor dear Charlie Hill! she really had loved him; but mamma was very right to put a stop to it. It would have been very imprudent, for he had nothing, and she had not enough for two.'

Young Roger's family understood her game perfectly, and exposed it to him; but his infatuation was complete, and the lady's tactics were masterly. Lord Whylie, one of the first matches in England, did not come forward; and Lydia, in her twenty-third year, made a show of throwing him over for Roger, and became Mrs Austen. His family accepted the inevitable ill with dignified resignation, but their resolute cold civility was torture to him, and intolerably irritating to his wife.

In London, it was endurable; but in the country, where every one knows every one, and scans every one's conduct and motives, and people must come into very close contact, it was not to be borne. Mrs Austen told her husband that they must take a place in some distant county; she did not care where, provided she need never meet his relations, and he was glad to acquiesce.

In some queer way—they never remembered exactly how—they heard of the Moated Grange. Mrs Austen laughed at the character of the place, said it corresponded in so many points with their requirements that they would go and look at it, and that money would make any house cheerful and healthy.

It is therefore time to describe it. In the first place, the country was tame and undulating; rich grazing land, suggestive of fat cattle, clownish peasantry, and uncultivated, good-cheer-loving squires. The estate had been one of the confiscated Benedictine foundations; and a portion of the massive old monastery remained, protected on the west by a deep moat, to which the shade of a thick plantation gave a peculiarly sombre character. Mullioned windows, and pointed, ivy-clothed gables, seemed to protest silently against their degradation, for the refectory had become a kitchen; the library, a laundry; the community-room, a dairy; and the cells of learned contemplatives were used as servants' apartments. To this building some one had added, in the reign of George II., a large red brick mansion, with sash windows, fronting east, and consisting of a centre and two wings, connected with the ancient building by narrow dark passages and two staircases. The bedrooms were oddly, and, according to modern notions, inconveniently arranged: two, three, even four, opened one into the other; and in three instances, where the floors of some of them had been raised, in order to give greater height to the drawing-rooms under them, there was a descent of four steps into adjoining bed-chambers, with a door at the top and bottom of these steps, enclosing a dark, useless little place, which, to children and nervous individuals, seemed especially calculated for harbouring at night persons with felonious intentions. The rooms were spacious and generally well proportioned; and the three principal staircases—one in each wing, and one in the centre—were of oak, very broad, with shallow steps, and carved balusters. The principal entrance was in the centre; but in each wing there was a small hall, opening north and south on a grass-plot enclosed by very high yew-hedges and old trees. The house abounded in odd corners, passages, and closets, which seemed to have been made of space left over, after the architect had finished the rest of his task. The immediate approach was a very broad semicircular grand drive, separated from the park by posts and chains; and a hundred yards beyond them commenced

an avenue of noble limes, extending to the lodges, a quarter of a mile distant, and built of red brick like the Grange. There were seven acres of pleasure-ground—kitchen-gardens and orchards included—and the park was irregular, but several miles in circumference.

Mr and Mrs Austen posted from London with four horses, and slept, on the last night of their journey, at the George Inn at Greatlevel, eight miles from Endham. The landlord being informed of their object, and asked for information essential to it, hesitated between dread of driving away opulent neighbours, who would 'bring grist to his mill,' and a natural desire to narrate all that rumour told of the unfavourable character of the old house. He compromised with himself, and the Austens heard no more than confirmed their previous notions. Mr Austen's 'man,' and Mrs Austen's 'own woman,' however, gathered dark and terrible facts, and garnered them. The keys of the house had been left with an attorney at Greatlevel, who had the letting of the land; he had some difficulty in finding them, and expressed deep regret that he had not been apprised of the intended visit, that he might have made fitting preparations. It might, he said, be twenty, or even thirty years since the Moated Grange had been opened, in his father's lifetime, immediately after Mr Marmaduke Sandford's death. There had never been the slightest chance of letting it, and he feared it was in great disorder. Should he send some one in the morning, or go himself, to wait there for Mr Austen? No; that gentleman preferred to trouble no one; he must necessarily take his own coachman and footman, and they could open the doors and windows. He supposed he could find safe stabling for horses at Endham.

So, on a bright June morning, for the first time since Marmaduke Sandford's funeral, a carriage drove up to the long deserted mansion. Mr Austen shuddered, and said he felt as if he were going to open a grave; and Mrs Austen laughed, and said she was reminded of the Sleeping Beauty in the wood. The rusty key was turned with great difficulty in the hall-door, and the force necessary for pushing it open acting suddenly, one of the hinges gave way, and it fell inwards with a crash, which made the long undisturbed dust and cobwebs fly, as if angrily, in the faces of the incomers, and drive them all off for some minutes. The servants went on unwillingly to open shutters and windows; they not only disliked the consequences to their clothes, and the hard work of removing massive iron bars, but a superstitious dread was on them. They had supped full of horrors in the bar of the George on the previous evening, and the footman, a Cornishman, declared that 'a more ghastly old place he never see.' As they proceeded, even Mrs Austen became subdued by tokens of life suddenly arrested long ago. The best of the furniture only had been removed after Mr Sandford's death, and such things as a half-written letter on a bureau, some faded port wine in a decanter, stray gloves, books, and music, sent a chill to the heart. In one room was a large, unfinished carpet, in a forgotten stitch, on which many workers seemed to have been employed, for, on unfolding it, twenty pair of scissors fell out. Where were the hands that had left them there? Dark stains on the floor and on some bedding in one of the bedrooms in the south wing told distinctly where Marmaduke Sandford had destroyed himself, and that friends had shrunk from visiting it, and servants from doing what decency demanded.

But Mrs Austen was not nervous, nor burdened with sensibilities, and she took practical, common-sense views. She represented to her husband that the house was remarkably well built; that though it had been uninhabited so long, there was no damp; that painters, gilders, cleaners, and modern furniture, would make it as handsome and enjoyable a residence as any in the kingdom—that the dreary external

features were all capable of removal. They must have the hedges trimmed, the shrubberies cleared, the fish-pond cleaned, a sunk fence instead of the posts and chain. She should take in ground for a large flower-garden; and he must overbid the grazing tenants, get the park into his own hands, and preserve game. She assured him that, with the good hunting and other local interest and employment, he would be a very happy country gentleman. He was silenced, but not satisfied, and became tenant of the Moated Grange, with a twenty-one years' lease, renewable on easy terms.

Mrs Austen's plans worked well, for she had a capacity for government. She brought from remote places servants who were uninfluenced by local fears, and cared only to 'eat, drink, and be merry;' and though a cook died of delirium tremens in one of the small-windowed chambers overlooking the moat, muttering awful words which indicated dread—of 'judgment to come,' no one was the sadder or the wiser; a partly-filled bottle of brandy, found under her pillow when she was washed and dressed for the last time, was considered a sufficient explanation of her 'ravings;' and the nurses, when their work was done, made themselves cheerful with the spirits, and said 'twas a pity the poor soul hadn't sense to take a drop in reason, as they did; she might have lived many a long year if she had, and died more comfortable.' A few months later, a groom—crossed in love, it was supposed—was found with his throat cut in the stable with his mistress's pet pony's; but the coachman cursed him for the trouble the circumstance caused him, since he had been up late, enjoying himself, the night before, and was behind-hand with his work that morning, and 'didn't want nothin' extra to do that day, of all days in the year.' Mr Austen thought of the well-regulated paternal home, where such terrible incidents did not occur, and shuddered, and rode hard to shake off their impression. Mrs Austen said it was wonderful what fools women made of men in every rank of life; and took credit silently, to herself, for having done so little mischief with such great powers of attraction; and in spite of these things, 'the world, the flesh, and the devil' made the old Grange so merry, that it lost much of its bad name during the first twelve years of the Austens' occupancy; while they and their household, 'understanding not,' troubled themselves not at all as to what they were compared.

It would have been surely very pleasant to travel as the noble and wealthy travelled seventy years ago, if there had been no fear of highwaymen, and one were not in a hurry. How one might have dreamed, thought, almost written a novel between York and London! But Roger Austen, lounging in his well-built family coach, drawn by four horses that were doing their best for him, was a man of disturbed countenance. To be sure, he *was* in a hurry, and he had ample reason to apprehend being attacked; but apart from all that, he had unpleasant matter for cogitation. Contrary to the will of his lordly wife, he was going to London to fetch two new inmates for his family. A letter had informed him of the arrival there of Mademoiselle Pauline de Tourzel, a young lady sixteen years old, the sole survivor of her family, and saved almost miraculously from the fury of the French revolutionary mob by the heroic devotion of the Abbé Oufroi—private chaplain to her father, and tutor to her young brothers—who implored speedy advice and assistance. The Austens piqued themselves—among other old-fashioned virtues—on hereditary friendships; and their fathers and grandfathers had been attached to the De Tourzels. But a man who gives way habitually to his wife, has a fearful sense of risk dwelling on him when he flies in her face, especially when he has submitted for years, and found things go on very well without his interference. Thus it was with the

Austens in ordinary cases; and Roger deemed his wife a Semiramis, and calculated consequences on a corresponding scale of mischief. She had taken to—somewhat to his amusement, for he knew she had no pious belief—the religious line, and talked of danger to his children's faith, consequent on the domestication among them of a popish priest and a girl reared in popery. Now, just at that time all England, in the teeth of penal enactment and traditional prejudice, moved by the dear old Anglo-Saxon love of justice and mercy which shines in Edward the Confessor's constitutions, was welcoming emigrants of every class, despite their creed or calling, and doing her best to solace and relieve them; so Roger could scarcely do less, family feeling even unregarded. But he thought, with a shiver, of coldness, of curtain-lectures, of pain, probably to be inflicted on the helpless twain whom he was resolved to introduce at home; of difficulty, complicated almost beyond endurance, if Mademoiselle de Tourzel were a beauty, or, even worse, a wit. A determination resolutely to brave all this was the solitary heroism of his career; and as heroic virtue and suffering are inseparable, he looked and felt ill when, after four days' and nights' communing with himself in this wise, he reached London, and had, at a mean lodging in Crutched Friars, his first interview with the persons whom he had travelled so far to help.

Mrs Austen did not pine during her husband's absence; why should she? He took none of her good things away with him. Nor was she troubled by the impossibility of hearing from him daily, or even weekly. Two letters she received, and deemed them quite enough. The first informed her that Mademoiselle de Tourzel was so shattered by her recent sufferings, mental and bodily, that it would be impossible for her to make a long journey in less than a month; and the second, that the young lady being convalescent, Mr Austen would reach home in the sixth week from his departure thence, bringing her, the Abbé Oufroi, and a female servant. The uncertainties of travel made it impossible to say on what day he should reach his family; he might not find post-horses ready everywhere, and it was always within the scope of possibility that one might be delayed by an interview with robbers. Mrs Austen took it all easily; and when the travel-worn party came, she was entertaining a brilliant company in her drawing-room. She received her husband as if they had parted that morning, and his two companions with a fashionable courtesy, devoid of all expression of welcome, but conventionally unimpeachable. The abbé was a gentleman, and accustomed to polished society; Pauline was a far-descended gentlewoman; both had the delicacy of perception which enabled them to grasp at a glance their position in that house with regard to Madame. Before the young girl slept, she prayed for strength to bear her trials meekly and wisely; and the old man asked that he might be spared to watch over and comfort her as long as she needed him.

Mr Austen, piqued by his wife's manner, had the more courage to inform her that he had engaged the abbé as tutor to his boys, stipulating for non-interference with their Protestantism; and that he intended Pauline to abide as an honoured guest at the Grange as long as she found it convenient to do so; also, that the elderly Frenchwoman, Delphine, who came with her, was to be retained for her sole service, and to sleep in her dressing-room. He did not add that he had apologised to Pauline for his wife's not accompanying him when he went to meet her; and that he had himself hunted out Delphine—also a refugee and Catholic—in order that Mademoiselle de Tourzel might travel with decorum, and ensured some one in his house able and willing to care for her health and comfort. He decided further, that it was more prudent, as well as more generous, to omit to mention that he

had, through the abbé's connivance, provided a suitable wardrobe for her, without her knowing whence it came, and that he had insisted on that gentleman's accepting such a stipend for his services as would enable him to supply her wants and gratify her tastes without wounding her feelings. She had known the abbé from her earliest recollection, and regarded him as a second father, even before he saved her life by his devotion.

Mrs Austen submitted silently, implying, nevertheless, that to a woman so injured there was no other dignified course open. In fact, her husband's resolute tone and well-arranged plans made opposition useless; and Roger, marvelling that he escaped a hurricane of reproach and contradiction, failed to perceive that this was mainly due to his having done the right thing at the right time.

Pauline was, however, a beauty, and, moreover, what would be called in these days 'a gentleman's beauty.' She was tall, symmetrical, graceful, with features as exquisitely expressive as those of an impulsive, affectionate, talented girl must be whose impetuosity has been regulated in the first place by wise and tender teaching, and afterwards by the passing through tragic circumstances. She was dark, had an abundance of soft wavy hair, and a clear brunette complexion, ever varying. She had a sweet, low voice, spoke very little English, seemed timid, though she was perfectly self-possessed, and had unusual strength of character. Coquetry was not in her. The Abbé Oufroi was fifty, but looked sixty-five. Intense study and much sorrow had aged him prematurely.

The first breakfast after their arrival was a momentous affair. Roger was frank and cordial; Mrs Austen, coldly charming; the various guests were variously affected. Most of them felt the old-fashioned bitterness against priests and popery, and were prepared to believe anything monstrous in connection with them; but they were ready to forgive a great deal to those who had suffered much, and they all felt, as people will always feel, the influence of genuine refinement and benevolence. Two young country squires fell furiously in love with Pauline; and an ancient admirer of Mrs Austen's—believed by her to have remained unwedded for her sake—was detected by her investigating Pauline's attractions with a degree of interest for which he suffered many tart speeches and cross looks during the remainder of the day. Men and women were essentially the same then as they are now, and as they will be to the end of time, however their conventional crust may change, and no one need be told in detail of the vexations and trials which Pauline's charms brought on her through Mrs Austen's aggrieved vanity; of the abbé's judicious soothing counsels; of Roger Austen's persistent kindness. Things had gone on thus for more than a year, and Mrs Austen had been first angry, and then puzzled by Pauline's rejection of two good matches; angry first, because she would have been glad to get rid of her decently—puzzled lastly, because she did not see what 'the girl' could expect better. To get into her confidence was impossible, and so it was to quarrel with her, for she had no fancy for that 'last word' which has been a pet bone of contention for ages. Mrs Austen hated her vigorously, but could not harm her. She had put her, in spite of her husband's remonstrances, to sleep in the room where Marmaduke Sandford destroyed himself, hoping that his story, which she was resolved should reach her, would upset her nerves; but when Pauline heard it, she only pitied the unhappy man, was sure he must have been mad when he committed such a dreadful act, marvelled at superstitious fears, and said that guardian angels were more powerful than evil spirits. She so arranged her little oratory that the *prie-dieu* covered the dark stains in the oak floor which were believed to be Marmaduke's blood; and her pictures

of the Virgin Mother and Holy Child, of Jesus risen, and of the beloved disciple, made the apartment not only pleasant to her and her good attendant, but to the servants who kept it in order. They said it 'warn't like the same place as it was afore Mamselle came.'

RUSSIAN JOTTINGS.

THIRD ARTICLE.

BEFORE going to a foreign country, it is very useful to know what 'to eat, drink, and avoid.' It is a popular belief among certain classes in England that the Russians have a great partiality for tallow-candles, as a nutritive article of diet, and that train-oil stands higher in their estimation than pale ale or stout. There is no necessity for us to remark on the absurdity of this. That they are fond of grease, is certain, for they can scarcely cook anything without a liberal allowance of butter. Therefore, were we to tell you what to avoid, in the event of your paying a visit to the Baltic Provinces, we should enumerate so many things that you would be half-starved if you followed our advice. You may be in a house, and hear a tremendous thumping in an adjoining room; in the innocence of your heart, you imagine they must be beating carpets, when, in fact, they are preparing a beef-steak for cooking! After thus pounding it, they fry it in butter, and when it comes to table, it looks like so much horseflesh. You take a little, in order to save appearances, and make your dinner off bread and cheese, or anything else that may present itself, or wait till you get home. It is, however, but justice to state, that at the first-class restaurations at St Petersburg you can get a beautiful steak.

When Russians rise in the morning, they take a cup of coffee and a few rusks; at twelve, they will have what they call breakfast, but what we would call lunch; at three or four, they dine; and at about eight or nine, they take tea, with which they have meat; and they have no supper. Shortly before dinner, they take a glass of *schnapps*, or spirits, with a sardine, a piece of raw herring, or some caviar, and a portion of bread. They believe this to be provocative of appetite. This *schnapps* is a kind of liqueur. The Russians are famous for these liqueurs, some of which are very good and cheap. Caviar is one of the most celebrated Russian dishes. It is the roe of sturgeons, which they spread on bread, and eat with much gusto. Most strangers are partial to it. At dinner, one dish is handed round at a time, ready carved; the host and hostess thus have no trouble, and can pay more attention to their guests. And very curious things they have for dinner. We have been amazed at the diversity of soups: they make soups out of everything; they even press beer into the service, and make soup out of that! In summer, they have a very favourite dish—sour-milk. Our readers will doubtless remark: 'Sour-milk! why, it is only fit for pigs.' To which we would most respectfully reply: 'Then don't give it to them, but eat it yourselves.' This is one of the notions we might import with advantage. It is prepared thus: pour some milk into a shallow dish, and put it in a rather warm place until it gets solid. It is then served up, and eaten with cream, nutmeg, and sugar; and we can assure our readers it is delicious and refreshing. It is likewise a favourite dish in Germany. They have another national German dish—*sauer-kraut*. Our readers have doubtless all heard of the black bread of Russia. It is made of rye, and has a sourish taste, which is at first disagreeable; but you soon become accustomed to it, and often prefer it to wheaten bread. It is very wholesome, and is eaten by all classes. They say the finest bread in the world is made at Moscow. The finest we have tasted was at St Petersburg. There they sell it at stalls in the streets. At the Gostini Dwar are several of these

stalls, the proprietors of which must have thought that our mission to St Petersburg was solely to get our bread, or, at all events, that we stood in most urgent need of it, for they held it before us, and pressed us to buy in the most energetic and persevering manner. We wonder they didn't thrust champagne on us in the same pressing manner, for nothing can seemingly be done in Russia without it. The consumption is enormous. We should think much more is drunk in Russia than is made in France.

Now, we will give you another Russian notion, which you will doubtless think as ridiculous as the last, until you have tried it. When you take tea, use a tumbler instead of a cup, and, in lieu of milk, put in a slice of lemon. A Russian will tell you that milk spoils tea, and we are decidedly of his opinion; and we are likewise of his opinion that tea in a tumbler, with lemon in it, is a most delicious and refreshing drink. And, let us tell you, the Russians ought to be good judges, for they are perhaps the greatest tea-drinkers in the world. Some of them take sugar not in their tea, but *with it*; they put the sugar between their teeth, and then drink the tea. They are great connoisseurs of tea, and boast of getting the finest in the world; and certainly, if price is a test of quality, they most unquestionably do get the finest, for they sometimes pay as much as 35s. a pound for it. They get it overland, and assert that the sea-voyage spoils it. We are not in a position to decide this question; but we think the fact of their having better tea is owing to their paying the Chinese a higher price than anybody else. A great deal, doubtless, depends on the making of it. They have admirable tea-machines, called *sarnovers*. They somewhat resemble our urns; but instead of a hot iron they use charcoal. They make the tea in a small tea-pot, place it on the top of the *sarnover*, and the heat from the charcoal thus draws all the strength and flavour out of the tea. They pour a small quantity into a tumbler, and fill it up with hot water. So addicted are the Russians to drinking tea, that some of them are at it all day long, particularly the shopkeepers, who cannot make a bargain without sundry glasses of it. Such a national custom is it that the people ask you for *na tehai* (tea-money) instead of beer-money.

There is an amazing number of Jews in Russia, who decidedly belong to the great unwashed class. These people are as industrious and as desirous of turning a penny as they are everywhere else. The Russians have quite adopted their peculiar manner of trading. Let us illustrate it by an experience of our own. You enter a shop, and ask the price of a portmanteau.

'What is the price?'

'Nine roubles.'

'Nine roubles! I'll give you five.'

'Five! It cost me seven.'

'Come, I'll give you five and a half.'

'No; you may have it for eight.'

'No; I'll give five and a half.'

'Impossible. Less than eight I cannot take.'

'Now, I'll tell you what I'll do—I will give you six roubles, and not a kopeck more.'

'Well, now, say seven and a half, and you can have it—not a kopeck less.'

This will go on for a long time; the shopkeeper will make frequent and energetic appeals to Heaven, and will extol his goods to the utmost, until, your patience being exhausted, you prepare to quit the shop, when he will call you back and say: 'Give me your money.' The loss of time attending these transactions appears to be of no consideration: it is astonishing what time and eloquence they will waste in order to gain a few kopecks more than the value of the article.

The Russian is remarkably cute at driving a bargain. According to careful calculations that have been made, it is calculated that it takes two Jews to do a Russian. We have often marvelled at the impudence of the tradesmen in Russia asking such exorbitant prices

for their goods. What with their cupidity, and the enormous duties, nearly everything is charged at a fabulous rate. This renders Russia the most expensive place in the world to reside in. A small family living at St Petersburg, and studying the strictest economy, will require an income of three hundred pounds a year. While on the subject of business, we may state that the Russians have a way of contracting with their doctors; these gentlemen do not have a regular fee, but are paid according to the means of the patient.

Among the customs of the Russians is a very sensible one for New-year's Day: everybody is expected to pay everybody else a congratulatory visit on that day. But this can be avoided by sending some money to the poor, and on New-year's Day the journals publish a list of persons who have given to the charities. This is considered a satisfactory alternative. New-year's Day and Christmas-day are special holidays, and a great number of parties are given. At these parties, they mostly have large Christmas-trees, handsomely decorated, and loaded with presents; some of them cost large sums of money. The Russians are famous people for giving presents; such a custom is it, that the servants make it part of the agreement that they shall have a present on St John's Day and at Christmas. Everybody expects a present at Christmas; even merchants make their clerks handsome presents at this time.

We were at first much astonished at the childish games they have at some of their parties; for instance, games somewhat resembling blindman's-buff, in which old and young all join. In a short time, you become accustomed to this, and enjoy it as heartily as the others. It is good to be children sometimes; and it is certainly preferable to cards, when played for high stakes, which is too frequently the case. The Russians have quite a penchant for gambling; whist and preference are the favourite games; but they are likewise much devoted to dancing, music, and billiards. Like the Germans, they are desperate smokers. A cigar or cigarette is seldom out of their mouths. Call upon a person at what time you will, he will offer you a cigar; and this habit is not confined to the men—many ladies smoke. So universal is the habit, that we have often seen the clerks in offices smoking. And yet perhaps the most remarkable of Russian customs is the prohibition of smoking in the streets of St Petersburg. The only explanation of it that we could get was its acting as a preventive to fire. Fires are, indeed, of frequent occurrence, but it is difficult to understand how the prohibition of smoking in the streets can prevent them. It is curious to watch their proceedings when a fire does take place. Their engines are about double the size of a large garden-engine, and have about the same power as a small one; and they are followed by trucks carrying barrels of water. Our readers can readily imagine the degree of efficacy of these fire annihilators. The men are dressed something like soldiers. When they reach the fire, there is about as much noise as smoke. They make a pretence of putting it out, but in nearly all cases that is futile; and they seem to know it, for they soon desist from playing on the house, and, instead, amuse themselves by drawing out with a long pole, having an iron hook at the end of it, any beam they can reach. This is done with much noise; the fireman plays on it, and extinguishes the flames; the bystanders applaud their success, and, thus encouraged, they lay hold of another bit of wood; the fireman meanwhile clapping his hand over the end of the brass tube, lest the water should be wasted. But the most valuable allies in extinguishing a conflagration are the sweeps; these men invariably attend. Insuring against fire is cheap in Russia. This is another thing we might copy with advantage, our enlightened government, in this respect, esteeming it a paternal duty to discourage such provident habits in the people.

The only sport the Russians indulge in is an occasional wolf-hunt, or shooting. They are decidedly bad riders, but they have some very pretty horses, which have the recommendation of being cheap. They prefer driving to riding, and have some remarkably neat equipages. The harness is particularly light and graceful, and they do not adopt that ugly and silly custom of having blinkers to the horses; neither do they adopt the ridiculous and cruel plan of cutting their horses' tails short, but leave them as nature intended—for ornament and use. They take the right-hand side of the road when driving. Their mode of driving is very peculiar: they hold a rein in each hand, and stretch out their arm to the utmost in a line with the horse. This method must be particularly fatiguing. The Russian has great predilection for fast driving, and he is very skilful. A very fashionable mode with them is the *troika*; this is three horses harnessed abreast; the one in the shafts trots, while the others gallop, the outside ones having their necks turned round as far as possible from the centre horse, and held in that position by a strap for the purpose. This is considered the acme of elegance; but, to our thinking, it is as ungraceful as cruel, and an outrage on nature.

Some writers attack the Russians for their foul habits. To a certain extent, they are right, and any unfortunate traveller who has to sleep at one of the country inns will soon have a lively impression of it.

As the Russian peasant does not take off his clothes for a week at a time, you may suppose that the odour emanating from his body does not much resemble frankincense or musk; to be frank with you, he smells abominably. But perhaps our readers are desirous of learning on what solemn occasion it is that he does undress. He does so every week when he takes his bath. To do the Russian justice, he is particularly attached to his bath; and so, probably, would our readers be, if they had once experienced it. The bath in Russia is a regular institution, and is therefore deserving of particular mention. You can form but little idea how very important it is, in their estimation. Every Saturday may be seen hundreds of men, women, and children carrying a bundle of twigs with the leaves on, and repairing to the baths, while others will be returning from them with remarkably red and clean faces. The price varies from 1d. to 6s. If you pay less than 1s. 6d., you will have to bathe with others. And this is the *modus operandi*.

We will suppose you are taking your first bath. You undress in one room; pass through a second, which is very warm; and then into a third, which is still warmer. In one corner of the last is a large stove; in another, three or four very broad steps or benches, the highest being about three feet from the ceiling: there are likewise an ordinary warm-bath, a shower and a douche bath; also a broad bench. You mount to the top of the steps, and lie down; the attendant opens the door of the stove, and throws a couple of pails of water on the hot stones placed therein; a volume of steam rushes out, ascends to the ceiling, and envelops you; you begin to gasp like a fish out of water; the steam appears to be scorching you; the perspiration runs off you like rain; you feel very faint, and dip some bass into cold water, and bathe your face; this most likely recovers you; but you feel so excessively hot, that you make a bolt, unless you have plenty of pluck, in which case you clench your teeth with the determination of going through with it. The attendant now climbs up to you, and mercilessly commences a flagellation with a bunch of switches having the leaves on, which he keeps dipping into hot water. You fancy, if you had the choice, that you would sooner be a boy again, submitting to a sound thrashing from your much-respected schoolmaster. You groan under the operation; your torturer, instead of

heeding this, turns you round so as to whip every part of your body. When that punishment is over, he tells you to descend, which you do with wonderful alacrity. He then places you under the shower or douche bath, or throws a few pails of tepid or cold water over you. You already feel somewhat better, but he has not yet done with you; he puts you into a warm-bath, and afterwards tells you to lie down on the bench; he then takes a handful of bass, soaps it till it is covered with lather, and gives you such a washing as you never had in your life. When that is finished, he throws some more buckets of water over you. You then go into room No. 2, have a large towel thrown over you, and are rubbed dry. You then, if you feel inclined, lie down on the couch, and smoke a cigarette, and finally emerge from the bath 'like man new made.' You may have entered it languid, tired, harassed, and poorly; you return home thoroughly refreshed, invigorated, and ready to jump or run for a wager. When you get used to this bath—which you very soon do—you experience no disagreeable sensations whatever, but, on the contrary, thoroughly enjoy every stage of it.

The bath is the only enjoyment—except getting drunk—that most of the poor people in Russia have. To some of you, it may appear the height of madness to have cold water thrown over you while in such a violent state of perspiration. But this is easily explained. Bear in mind that there are two kinds of perspiration, active and passive. If you were to plunge into cold water immediately after taking some violent exercise, it would in all probability be your death; but to do so when in a passive state—as occasioned by the bath—it is invigorating and refreshing. At Hamburg, we went to have a cold douche-bath, and the attendant shewed us into a room full of steam, and told us to lie down there for a short time previous to having it. On asking the reason of this, he said it was not healthy to take a cold-bath without having a vapour one. It is said that the peasantry, on emerging from the steam-bath, will roll themselves in the snow; and we believe the North American Indians do much the same thing. They dig a hole in the ground, make a fire at the bottom of it, upon which they place some stones; when these are hot, they jump in, cover themselves over, get well steamed, and then roll in the snow. The frequency with which the Russians indulge in this bath is considered to be injurious, and is partly the cause of the sallow complexions of many of them.

Now that we have described a flogging for amusement, let us speak of a flogging in earnest. The mention of Russia will doubtless be associated in the minds of most of you with that terrible instrument of punishment, the 'knout.' It is a long thong made of leather, plaited in a triangular form, and fastened to a short handle; and such a fearful instrument is it that it is said the executioner can, with one well-directed blow, deprive the victim of life. We will not vouch for this, but have frequently heard it. However, to the honour of the present race of Russians be it said, that this torture has been abolished for many years. The punishment of death is likewise abolished, except in cases of high treason, or for grave offences in the army; they adopt instead the following method: the murderer is condemned to be thrice publicly whipped, and then sent to Siberia. We would respectfully suggest a similar punishment for the garroters. We will describe a scene at which we were present. The culprit was a woman who had been guilty of eight or nine murders. It was in the depth of winter. She was seated on a high seat placed in the middle of a kind of van, painted black; on her breast hung a board, on which were written her name and offence. She was escorted by a body of police with drawn swords, and slowly conveyed to the scaffold. This was erected about four feet from the ground, painted black, and had a post in the centre. On her arrival,

the police formed two sides of a square, presented arms, and an officer stepped forward and read the particulars of her trial in three languages—Russian, Lettish, and German. This took some time. At its conclusion, they assisted her up the steps, stripped her to the waist, put a noose round her wrists, drew the rope through a ring at the top of the post so as to raise her arms, and tied the other end of it round her legs. The executioner had on each side of the scaffold two bundles of rods; three rods were fastened together at one end, so that each stroke counted as three, and, in fact, one blow raised three weals. She was condemned to suffer ninety blows on each occasion; she therefore only received thirty strokes with the rod. We will forbear to wound your feelings by a further description, and merely remark that, after being whipped three times, she would have to walk to Siberia, which journey occupies, we believe, nine months. There was a good deal of solemnity about the scene, and, we imagine, it would serve as at least as great a caution as hanging. Criminals have half the head shaved every month, and have a small, square piece of black cloth let into the back of their jackets; the worst characters have chains attached to their legs.

The stick is a grand institution in Russia. It is considered that things cannot go on satisfactorily for long without it, and it is therefore in great request. Some affirm that the people like you all the better after a dose of stick, and think very little of you unless you frequently prescribe a dose of that medicine; and nothing is easier; you have no trouble whatever about it. All you have to do is to send to the police-office, and they will, with much alacrity and pleasure, send two men for the delinquent, carry him off to the prison, give him a sound thrashing, and send him home, as they imagine, a better man, or woman, as the case may be, for the police are not at all particular, and they are so very obliging in such cases. The porter at the house where we lived quarrelled with the landlord, and threatened to burn the house down; shortly afterwards, two policemen came, and obligingly intimated to him that certain sticks in the neighbourhood were particularly desirous of having an interview with him. He was duly thrashed, and positively appeared better for it, for he became much more civil. But the present enlightened emperor is making reforms here as well as in most other things affecting Russia, although the less said about unhappy Poland the better. He does not believe in the wonderful efficacy of the stick, and is gradually putting an end to it. The police do not walk the streets as they do in London, but are stationed at their boxes or huts, which, like the plums in a school-pudding, are few and far between; you will therefore be quite right in imagining that these gentlemen can be of little or no use. The inhabitants are certainly of that opinion, for in order to protect their property, they have a private watchman to sit outside their door all night. This individual, like our Charleys of the good old times, is much more partial to sleeping than watching; but when a passer-by happens to wake him, he will start up and make a riot which Dominie Sampson would term prodigious, by knocking two pieces of wood together, in order to convince people that he is wide awake and no mistake. But the poor fellows are greatly to be pitied in the winter-time, for, however cold it may be, they are obliged to keep watch outside. Why they couldn't guard the house as well inside as out, is one of the Russian mysteries that has not been explained to me; possibly the reason is, that it would necessitate their having another watchman to watch him.

We may here say a few words about that relic of the good old times—passports. To an Englishman, they are at all times a most abominable and absurd nuisance; but the passport system in Russia has been

lately greatly reformed, and you have comparatively little trouble about it. If you reside in the country, you must, like the natives, have a yearly residential passport, which is good for the whole empire; and when you leave the country, the officials are bound to give you a pass within twenty-four hours; but you are obliged to obtain a certificate from the police previously, stating that no debts are lodged against you. If you owe any money, and the creditor gives notice to the police, you are not allowed to leave the country till it be paid. During the whole time that we were in Russia, we had not the slightest trouble or annoyance about our passport.

We spoke of the habit the Russians have of crossing themselves; to such an extent is this carried, that they never commence a journey without doing it several times. We can quite understand their calling in the aid of religion when about to travel in one of their ordinary conveyances, for they are without springs, and what with that and the badness of the roads, the jolting is so terrific that you imagine all the bones in your body must be dislocated ere you arrive at the end of your journey. It is the most awful mode of travelling conceivable. In order to mitigate it as much as possible, the Russians are in the habit of travelling with one or more feather-pillows. Travelling in Russia is excessively fatiguing, unless you can go by the railway, and even then it is not expeditious; however, the arrangements for one's comfort are exceedingly good. The carriages—as on the German lines—are very comfortable, and far superior to ours. Their second-class are equal to our first, and their third to our second. Our third-class carriages they would rightly consider to be only fit for cattle. The Germans have a saying that only princes, fools, and Englishmen travel first-class. In winter, the carriages are well warmed; and in order to conduce as much as possible to the comfort of the passengers, they place ash-pans in the carriages for the accommodation of smokers. On the Moscow line, the carriages are built on the American principle. Two or three times during the day, they stop twenty minutes at a station, in order to take breakfast, dinner, or tea. As soon as the train stops, the tables are laid out with various hot dishes, wines, beer, tea, and coffee; the attendance is first-rate, and the prices are very moderate, a tariff of the same being hung up in the room. So far, the contrasts are in favour of the Russian lines; but there are some very serious drawbacks. In the first place, they go wretchedly slow, their highest rate of speed not exceeding twenty or twenty-five miles an hour. Then, if you have but a moderate quantity of luggage, they charge as much for it as for yourself. We would recommend all continental travellers who have much luggage to forward it by the goods-train, by which it will be taken at a very reasonable price. There are two curious stories in connection with the St Petersburg and Moscow line. When the plan was submitted to the Emperor Nicholas for his approval, he, of course, found that the line made various detours, in order to accommodate the towns in the vicinity. This did not coincide with that autocrat's idea of a Russian railway; he therefore himself turned engineer: he took a ruler and pencil, and by the simple and expeditious process of drawing a straight line from one city to the other, ordered that to be the railway! And so it was; and it is consequently the straightest line in the world, and the most unaccommodating one. But that is not the strangest circumstance respecting it. The most wonderful is, that after the contractors and various officials had been paid, it was discovered that the line had *shrunk* as much as thirty miles! Perhaps Baron Münchhausen would account for this by the severity of the cold! Russia is a splendid country for railway work. It is so level that no tunnels are required, and there are no cuttings or embankments of any importance; while there is an

abundance of timber. But there is one little drawback—a very large amount of money is required for bribes. That is a matter of course, and scarcely anything in Russia can be accomplished without it.

Journalism in Russia is at a very low ebb; their newspapers are very inferior, and will bear no comparison whatever with ours. However, they have some admirable magazines, which are cheap, and command a large circulation. In them are translations of the most popular English works of fiction. Sutherland Edwards, in his *The Russians at Home*, has a very clever and interesting chapter on this subject, a perusal of which, as well as the entire work, we can strongly recommend. The censorship in Russia is nothing like so strict as it used to be. They seldom stop a book. So far as our own experience goes, we took over about three hundred, among which were three or four republican works, and not one was stopped. They frequently blot out paragraphs in the foreign newspapers, and in such an efficient manner that there is no chance of reading them. By the by, the censorship is carried to a very ridiculous extreme with respect to theatricals. To give one instance—the opera of *Masaniello* may be performed entire, but it must be called *The Duke of Burgundy*! In a country like Russia, you may be sure that trade is considerably hampered, and that great monopolies exist. Protection is carried out almost to its fullest extent, and imposes privations and much expense on the general public; and in spite of this, the manufacturers cannot compete with other countries. Nevertheless, it is now much more free than it was a few years since. Foreigners may now trade on an equal footing with the natives. In fact, most of the external commerce of Russia is in the hands of foreigners—most of the large commercial houses being English. For merchants, there are three guilds, to be a member of any of which one has to pay a certain sum annually. Each guild has, of course, certain privileges. Russia is an excellent place for business, and the profits are very large. The land, for agricultural purposes, is magnificent; and though agriculture has hitherto been carried on in a very rude state, a great deal of machinery is now imported from Germany. A very serious drawback is the bad roads. There is vast room for improvement in the breeding of cattle, most of the animals being wretchedly inferior; the sheep in particular are very small and lean. Pork and veal are very good; poultry is plentiful and excellent. The Russians breed an amazing number of bees. There is plenty of game, including deer, in the country. And those who are partial to a spice of danger in the chase, can be excellently accommodated in hunting the bear or wolf. This has been so well described by other travellers, that there is no necessity for us to do so here.

THE DOVES.

It was in the year 1830—I think, in the month of December—that I left my lodgings in the Rue Nivernois, for the purpose of visiting the house till lately occupied by the Duchesse de Berry in the Rue de Cléry. My object in going there was not to pay my respects to any of the royal family, as those who remember the events of that year will know, seeing that the former tenants had been for some months in exile; and yet my visit was not unconnected with them. The fact was, I had received a letter from a lady in England, informing me that a sale of the Duchess of Berry's property remaining in the royal residence in the Rue de Cléry was about to take place, and requesting me to attend it, and make any purchases of articles of interest that might be offered, on her account. On arriving at the building, I found that the sale was not then begun, and I walked through the rooms, and made a leisurely examination

of the objects displayed. A more miscellaneous collection I never saw heaped together. Here were the dresses of the royal owner, with the dust and dirt still clinging to some of them, as though she had just thrown them off; walking-dresses, ball-dresses, fancy costumes worn at the masquerades—in which the duchess is said to have delighted—shawls, slippers, and boots which the legendary admirer of little feet would have been tempted to adore. Along with these masquerading costumes, were numerous articles of jewellery, of no intrinsic value, probably worn in the crowded assemblages, where ladies have too much regard for their real jewels to expose them to contact with the multitude, or, as perhaps was more likely, they were the mock diamonds, rubies, and emeralds found after the guests had departed from those entertainments. I was examining some of the articles displayed, which, though not more necessary to a princess than those I have mentioned, were more suitable as mementoes of her taste, and better adapted for the drawing-room of my friends, when I felt a hand laid on my shoulder. I looked up; it was a literary man I had often met in the same apartments, when they presented a very different aspect.

'I did not expect to see you here, Arthur,' he began. 'It was natural that I should come; but that you, an Englishman, should feel an interest in anything belonging to an unfortunate family, sufficient to bring you all the way from the Rue Nivernois, rather surprises me.'

'You have not the reputation of being very sentimental yourself, Deligny. I fancy the exiles have no very friendly recollection of you.'

He laughed. 'What a gathering, eh! Peers and countesses, brokers and old-clothes women. They say that after our friend Charles X. had fled, it was found he had left behind him no end of pheasants' and partridges' eggs, besides sixteen hundred pots of jelly and jams, and whole bushels of sugar-plums.'

'So I heard.—The red ribbon seems to muster here pretty strongly. Look, there are no less than five together staring at that bookcase.'

'Can you wonder at that, Arthur, my friend? Do you know how Cauvin got his?'

'No.'

'Why, he applied for it on the ground that his uncle was the first priest addressed by the Comte d'Artois after his return to France in 1814.'

'And got it?'

'And got it.'

'Do not look round just at this moment, Deligny; but there is a fair, smooth-faced man talking to the auctioneer, I have often seen at Prince Polignac's. I should like to know who he is.'

After an instant, Deligny turned round, glanced at the person I had referred to, and said: 'I have seen him there too. He looks very like a *mouchard*.'

'Simpson, you know most of the men who used to visit at Polignac's. Can you tell me who that man is who is turning over the things on that tray? Deligny thinks he must be a *mouchard*.'

'He a *mouchard*! not a bit of it. Deligny ought to know better than that, seeing that it is very likely to him he owes it that a good many of his articles have seen the light without mutilation. He is a censor, and so indulgent that a capital story is told of him. A translation of the Koran was submitted to him in his official capacity for his judgment, and the opinion he pronounced was, "that there was nothing in it opposed to the morals, the religion, or the government of France."'

'It must have been Karr who told you that,' said Deligny with a laugh. 'But you have mistaken the man. Arthur means the fair-haired man who is looking at the sham jewellery there by the window.'

'*Pas connu*. Stay, though. I have seen him at Polignac's, when the prince has had a grand reception, and I have seen him at the house of his friend

Peyronnet. He certainly looks more like a *mouchard* than anything else; but I don't know him. I dare say, though, Brissac knows all about him, if he is in that line.'

As the morning advanced, the rooms became crowded with persons who attended sales for profit, but among them were many who had come there for the same reason that I had, and who cared little what price they paid, provided they got the article on which they had set their mind. M. de Brissac was among the latter number, and as we were very good friends, we remained together. The sale had been going on for two or three hours, and we had seen very few things offered which were worth our attention, when a small rosewood case for holding writing-paper was handed up, with a little cabinet beneath for holding letters. Brissac told me he should bid for this, unless I had a very particular desire for it. As I had not, he continued to bid till only himself and one other person competed for its possession. Rendered irritable by the opposition, he made a bid, and then turned quickly round to see who followed him. I looked round too, and close behind us stood the fair-haired man I had been inquiring about earlier in the morning. His hand was raised in the act of signalling to the auctioneer, but as his eyes rested on the angry countenance of Brissac, it dropped gradually to his side.

'It is you, is it, who dare to dispute the possession of that article with me?' said Brissac in a tone of anger and surprise.

'I beg a thousand pardons; I did not know; I had my orders,' he stammered.

'Don't answer me. Begone! Hollo! gendarme, put this man outside the door.'

The gendarme came forward, and though the man was leaving the room as fast as the crowd would allow him, he obsequiously pushed him, to hasten his movements. There is something humiliating to a man only to be a witness of the humiliation of another who dares not resent it, and I would gladly have separated myself from my friend if I could have done so. He himself seemed vexed at having drawn attention to us. Probably the idea occurred to him that those present might think he had driven the man from his room, because he was angry at not getting the thing as cheaply as he wished. At anyrate, the bidding was renewed, though he did not make another offer. Naturally, if I felt curious to know who the man was before, after this incident I became still more desirous of knowing. When we left the hôtel, the first question I asked was: 'Who is the man you ordered out of the room so peremptorily?'

'He! The greatest scoundrel in Paris. An assassin, a spy of the government, and, from what I heard a day or two ago, he is strongly suspected of being at the same time the chief of a gang of cut-throats and a receiver of stolen goods. If this last turns out to be true, he will experience a very abrupt and unpleasant termination of his career.'

'I thought the police authorities were not so particular as to the private practice of their agents in the last-named capacity.'

'Ah! this is a very different matter. Witnesses against members of this gang have been exhibited at La Morgue; and a magistrate was found dead in his room, who would have been supposed to have died of apoplexy, if the mark they fix on the foreheads of those they slay, from what they call political motives, had not been found on his.'

'Are they, then, a political society?'

'No, no. I did not use the word in that sense. Their policy seems to be to inspire such terror in the minds of persons robbed, that they shall prefer to keep the matter secret rather than appeal to justice; and they are rapidly succeeding in it.'

'I begin to feel a very lively interest in the individual. Suppose you season our lunch by telling me

something more about him. A murderer who can get employment under the government, cause his superiors to be disposed of if they oppose his ideas, and head a gang of thieves, is an interesting personage.

Willingly.—Waiter, let us have some champagne, and a little fruit.—The real name of this man, now known as Maxime Dulau, Brissac began, 'is Quenouillac. He must have been a mere boy in years during the troubles in La Vendée; but he had been selected by Count Kergoulet as one of his foresters, and therefore was in many respects better fitted for the warfare carried on in that province between the republicans and the royalists, than an older man less skilful in the use of firearms. His master was one of the most determined opponents the republicans had; and if Kergoulet was present at nearly all the encounters between the two parties, Quenouillac shewed himself a faithful follower, and was as well known to the soldiers on both sides as his master. His skill as a marksman was so conspicuous, that he and a few others were separated from the common herd, and allowed to take up what positions they pleased in these fights. One of the causes of the cruelties perpetrated on both sides, whenever the opportunity offered, arose out of the personal knowledge each had of the other. A man whose comrade fell dead beside him frequently knew the man who fired the shot or struck the blow; hence, Quenouillac was almost as much hated as his master, and the soldiers felt even a keener anxiety to get him in their hands, though, from the scarcity of good officers among the Vendéans, they had orders to aim at Count Kergoulet as often as the occasion offered, as his destruction would strike a heavier blow at the royalist cause than the slaughter of hundreds of his fellow-provincials. To shield himself as much as possible, Kergoulet was in the habit of disguising his appearance, and his presence in an encounter was frequently unknown to the enemy till after it was over.

Under pressure, which amounted to a threat, Desgenais, who commanded in the district where Kergoulet chiefly carried on his operations, sent one of his men, who had been trained for a priest, but who had left the seminary during the Revolution, in the guise of a priest, to Quenouillac's mother. This woman lived in a wood in the cottage allotted to her son as forester. In this disguise, the man made his way safely through dangers which would have been impassable in any other costume, and easily invented an excuse for asking permission to remain there for a few days. The lonely woman was glad enough to have somebody to speak to, and the pretended priest acquired such influence over her, that not many hours had passed before he was able to discuss with her the possibility of inducing her son to betray his master. He soon found that both mother and son had the greed for money which was the prevailing characteristic of the peasantry in those days, when money was rarely seen by them, and they had no refuge to flee to for shelter in their old age, and nothing between them and absolute starvation but the little hoard they could manage to scrape together before the day came in which they were able to work no longer. The amount he was permitted to offer appeared so large to the woman, that she did not hesitate to promise to do all in her power to persuade her son to accept it, and the result was that Quenouillac undertook to betray his master into the hands of the republicans. His first attempt to carry out his bargain was by sending his mother to the priest to inform him that Kergoulet would sleep the next night at a farm known as the Lightning-struck Oak Farm, not far from Briqufort, where there were a considerable number of Vendéans assembled waiting his arrival. A detachment of troops was sent by Desgenais to seize him here, but from some cause he did not sleep at the farm, but in a cottage at a little distance from it. The few men who accompanied him were put to

death as usual. Quenouillac was now in the power of the republicans, and, through his mother, the pretended priest intimated to him that if Count Kergoulet came out of the next battle alive, his treason would be made known to his master. Finding himself thus entrapped, Quenouillac agreed to accept the money on the conditions offered. Two days afterwards, a battle was fought at Briqufort, in which Count Kergoulet was shot, whether by his own servant or by the enemy cannot positively be known; but inasmuch as Quenouillac claimed the reward, and deserted his party, there is little doubt he did his best to earn it, and taking his skill as a marksman into account, it was not likely he would fail.

With the money thus acquired, he went to Paris, to avoid the risk of his crime becoming known while he was still within reach of the hands of his former comrades.

At the corner of the Rue St Nitouche, close to the old tower of St Jacques, there is a grocer's shop. It has been a grocer's shop so long, that it is quite an institution in the neighbourhood, and the man who keeps it is regarded by the people in that quarter as a model in every respect of what a citizen should be. He is a bachelor, and his house is kept by his mother, an old woman, who is so avaricious that she will not tolerate his keeping a servant, and is a constant obstacle to his indulgence of his benevolent feelings; although, from her complaints to the customers and neighbours of his extravagance on this score, he has the reputation of being a man of unbounded benevolence to those in want. By this politic proceeding, Maxime Dulau, as he calls himself, is able, without exciting remark, to keep everybody out of his establishment capable of telling of his irregular and unseemly hours, and also to maintain a very honourable reputation. More profitable business than that he carries on in his shop frequently requires his presence elsewhere; but those who saw him under the aspect he presented to-day, would not identify him with the black-haired grocer of the old school, who in his shop always wears the same old-fashioned brown coat.

The police authorities have always considered him one of their most useful servants, and for this reason, I believe, have winked at his connection with little intrigues he has embarked in on his own account; perhaps, also, the department benefited by them indirectly, if not otherwise. His last venture of this kind has been with a woman from his native province: she styles herself a countess, and though past the bloom of youth, is still very pretty, and by her eccentricities, and some insane passions she has inspired among the men, whose example is very generally followed by those who have more money than brains, she has created a sensation of which she is now in the full enjoyment, under the powerful protection of Maxime Dulau. The strangest thing connected with her, however, is, that she not only brought with her to Paris introductions to families of high standing, but although there are rumours afloat respecting her, there is no proved scandal, and wherever she goes she is always accompanied by the said Dulau, who passes as her half-brother. I can tell you no more at present, nor could I have told you so much if it had not been for that extraordinary combination which I told you of just now, which led to my having a report presented to me on the subject, in which he is represented as the chief of the gang. If you will call at my office three or four weeks hence, you shall have the result of the inquiry that is going on.

If this narrative of Brissac's had led to nothing further, I should not have thought it worth while to recall it, but as it did not stop here, I will relate the substance of what I learned afterwards. For some three or four years previously, there had been occasional reports of persons having been found strangled under circumstances which excited the suspicion that their

death had not been caused from motives of plunder. People who visited the Morgue were often puzzled to understand for what reason so many of the bodies exposed there had a peculiar mark on the forehead; and when it became generally known that it had been placed there by the murderers, it gave rise to the wildest and most alarming speculations. Rumours of fresh murders were current every morning. According to these, a body had been picked up on the steps of the Chamber of Representatives; another had been found lying on the parapet of the Pont Neuf; while a third, an agent of police, had been discovered suspended by a cord from a tree in the Champs Elysées: all of them with the same mark conspicuous on their forehead. This report, or one similar, was current early in the morning; before the day closed, there were half-a-dozen others circulating about the dinner-tables. Such a crowd assembled about the Morgue every morning, that, though only those were admitted who asserted they had lost a relative, not a twentieth part of these even succeeded in entering the building. Of course, only a very small proportion of these reports were true; but when it was known beyond a doubt that several police agents had been destroyed, who certainly could not have been murdered for the sake of the property they had on their persons, that a magistrate had been found strangled in his bedroom, all of them with the identical mark on the forehead, serious alarm was felt even by those who knew the precise truth. Beside these, there were many persons missing whose bodies were never discovered. At last, it began to be rumoured among the police officials that among the missing were several persons who had been last seen in the apartments of the Countess Terouach, where they were supposed to have won largely at cards or dice; gambling for heavy stakes being one of the amusements in which her visitors were at liberty to indulge, though she herself never joined in it, but amused herself with those guests who preferred conversation and music. There was, however, no way in which their imaginations could connect this gay and charming woman with crime, and it was therefore some time before these rumours reached a high-placed official capable of estimating the importance due to the discovery. As soon as the report had travelled sufficiently high, an order was issued directing Dulau's movements to be closely watched. He continued to make his reports as usual; but nothing suspicious in his movements was discovered; his time was fully accounted for from his leaving his shop till his return to it. A few days' watching was not quite without result, however, for it was seen that some of the persons who entered his shop when he was there, had also been present at the Countess Terouach's on the previous night: it was therefore assumed that the bond of union between them must be a very peculiar one, or they would not be acquainted with the secret of his identity. Other agents were appointed to watch the movements of these men, and the discovery of their mode of living would no doubt eventually have been made by this means, had it not been anticipated in a remarkable manner.

The officers of the *octroi* had received information that some of the men who navigated the floats of timber down the Seine into Paris were in the habit of bringing casks of wine with them secured beneath the floats, thus evading payment of the dues at the barrier. Two of the officials were one night in a boat lying beneath one of the bridges, for the purpose of noting the arrival of floats, and guarding them till they had been broken up. They were sitting silently smoking their pipes, when they were suddenly and greatly astonished by the slow descent of a woman, who was lowered noiselessly into the water, so far as the utterance of articulate sounds was concerned, but who shewed by her contortions that it was not with her consent. Before she was well submerged, the current

brought her alongside the boat, into which the men lifted her, and then pulled ashore as fast as possible. Leaving the boatmen to carry the woman where she would get the necessary attendance, the officers hastened up to the bridge, to endeavour to capture the persons who had evidently intended to murder her. These persons were probably so satisfied as to what the result would be, that they had disappeared, and not a human being was visible in any direction. As soon as the woman was brought into the light, it was found she had the fatal mark on her forehead, and that a very cruel, but curious and effectual device had been adopted to prevent her from crying out: a hole had been cut vertically through the tongue near the tip, and through this hole a short piece of stick had been thrust, which, pressing on her lips, was literally a seal upon them. Having received all the attention her condition required, she was left to herself till she was in a state to speak, when she told the following story:

"I am in the service of the Countess Terouach, and it was there I became acquainted with my husband, a black man, in consequence of his frequently coming there with notes from his master, M. Deligny, for Mademoiselle de Brevanne. It is nearly two years since we were married, and about a year and a half since M. Deligny discharged him, I believe, because he could not afford to keep him, owing to his having lost a great deal of money to a gentleman related to the countess. As my husband had no money, and could not get another place directly, I told my mistress we were married, and asked her to use her influence to get him something to do. A day or two afterwards, M. Dulau sent me for him, and when he came, gave him a note to a person calling himself the Count de Sallis. This person asked him a few questions, and then engaged him as his servant. Soon after this, I noticed a great change in my husband. He had plenty of money, and was constantly making me presents, so that I began to be afraid he could not get it honestly, especially as I had heard enough since I had been in the service of the countess to make me doubt whether she was really a countess, or my husband's master a count. One evening, when my husband was with me, I told him some of the things I had heard, and at last persuaded him to tell me who his master was. After making me solemnly vow that I would not repeat to anybody what he told me, he revealed to me that his master was one of the *Colombes*, and so also was M. Dulau. I asked: "Who are the *Colombes*?" He answered: "It is they who killed M. Lupalle [the magistrate already mentioned], and so many of the agents of police, and others, of which there have been so much talk." "Then," I said, "you, too, must be one of them." He began to weep when I said this, and answered: "What could I do? They would have killed me if I had refused." Madame had gone out, and we were sitting in her boudoir when he told me this. I was very much frightened, and sent him away. Presently, I heard Madame's bell ring, and went to her room. M. Dulau was with her, but I could not imagine how they got there, as I had not heard them come in. Madame saw I had been crying, and asked me what was the matter. I made an excuse; and then she gave me a note to take to a grocer's at the corner of the Rue St Nitouche. It was already late, and Madame told me there was a *fiacre* at the door, which I could have. The man drove me to the house, where I found an old woman, who said that the lady was not yet come home, and that I must wait. I waited a long time, and the woman gave me some coffee to keep me awake, because I had sat up nearly all the night before waiting for my mistress. At last, I fell asleep, and when I woke, I found myself on a bridge with two men. I was suffering very much pain at the mouth, but I could not move my hands, for they

were tied behind my back; neither could I cry out when the men put a rope across my chest, and under my arms, and let me down into the river.'

The woman gave the address of the Count de Sallia; and a police agent was sent there with orders to bring back with him the woman's husband, but no attempt was made to apprehend either his master or Dulau till the high police functionaries had been consulted. The negro, who was devotedly attached to his wife, when told how she had been treated, could scarcely be dissuaded from going up to his master's room, and killing him there; but being pacified by the assurance that the count would not be suffered to escape, he went willingly enough to the private room in the hospital to which his wife had been removed. As the acute police agent had imagined would be the case, there was no difficulty at all in inducing him to make the fullest avowals while under the influence of the rage inspired by the cruel treatment his wife had been subjected to by his accomplices. Being the servant of De Sallia, who, next to Dulau, was the chief of the atrocious gang who styled themselves Doves, he had been constantly employed in carrying notes to one or the other, and was thus able to give the private address of each. Two police agents were considered sufficient to secure the minor criminals; but a strong body was sent to the Rue St Nitouche, as it was here the dépôt of these wretches was established. Hastily as all these arrangements were made, it was quite daylight when, at a given signal, the police, who had straggled in the direction of the grocer's shop singly and in pairs, burst into it. Dulau was seized in bed, and carried off instantly to prison. The old woman would answer no questions; but the black knew enough to guide them to a door in the cellar which opened into the excavations which at that time abounded beneath the city. Five men were there discovered lying about the charcoal fire. These were seized, together with the plunder accumulated in the vault, which included objects of great value: gold and silver watches, and articles of jewellery sufficient to stock the largest shop in the Palais Royal; plates for printing bank-notes, a camera (which was described in the police inventory as an instrument the use of which was unknown), a large quantity of plate, and several lumps of silver, more or less alloyed, which were going to be used in coining, as was evident from the presence of moulds and heaps of coins of different denominations, which contained quite sufficient silver to render them current anywhere, except, perhaps, at the bank. Other discoveries were made of more importance to the government, which it would not be interesting to specify now.

Thus, a simple arrangement, arising out of the desire of saving the municipality from being defrauded of a few francs, led to the sudden and complete suppression of a gang of miscreants, who had excited more terror in Paris than was recently inspired in London by the ferocious deeds of the garroters.

MY GARDEN.

My garden is a tiny spot,
A little piece of arid ground,
O'erlooked by many a chimney-pot,
With house and wall encompassed round.

Three trees its narrow bounds enclose,
With feeble foliage, brown and spare,
Whose leaves in summer interpose
To shield me from the neighbour's stare.

Three sickly laurels grow beneath,
And every year attempt to shoot,
Although the atmosphere they breathe
Is overcharged with dust and soot.

No verdant turf, so smooth and green,
Is there, to tread beneath the feet,
But gravel coarse, with weeds between,
And pebbles gathered from the street.

But round the edge, with border low,
And in the midst one oval bed,
To tempt some hardy flowers to grow,
With richer soil is overspread.

All winter-time no ray is seen
Upon the frozen ground to fall,
So high the houses intervene
Their shadowing barrier of wall.

But when the sun has mounted high,
And sweet Spring fills e'en London air,
The beams that gild the country sky
Will shed some radiance even there.

O then, with heart that longs to flee
Afair from scenes of care and toil,
I seek my garden-plot, to see
What hopes may blossom from its soil.

With careful hand, I sow the seed
That best can brave a home so drear,
Half-loath to pluck the frequent weed,
Because its leaves all green appear.

The candytuft of various hue,
The wallflower, sweet to smell and sight,
Virginia stock, and crimson too,
And gay nasturtium's splendour bright.

More splendid still, the garden's pride,
Scarlet geranium's glowing head,
With calceolaria beside,
I plant within the middle bed.

And when in the sweet labour blest,
My little treasures, one by one,
Are placed where they may flourish best,
I sigh to think my work is done.

'Tis then I watch each bud unfold,
And count the blossoms o'er and o'er,
Like miser gloating over gold,
So dear to me my floral store.

Sometimes, at evening's silent hour,
When grave, yet tender thoughts will rise—
Whate'er the scene, with mystic power—
I in my garden moralise.

An emblem then it seems to be
Of mine own cold and arid lot,
Where difficulties compass me,
As walls surround this garden-plot.

Where suns, that e'en in winter glow
On happier sites, to warm and gild,
Can seldom reach, by sorrow so
My wintry heart is shaded, chilled.

But yet where God, whose tender care
Embraceth all, will still permit
Some joys, like flowers, though poor and rare,
In summer-time to gladden it.

So like my flowers, those joys I prize
As others value richer things,
For rareness pleasure magnifies,
And round it brighter lustre flings.

And thus I learn to look with love
On all God's feeble struggling creatures,
Since nothing is too mean to prove
A source of joy to humble natures.

Then turning to the solemn sky,
Whose stars shine o'er this garden small,
I find in its infinity
The God who made and loveth all.